



# **The WisDOT Connector *Express***

**January 15, 2008...Volume 9, Issue 1**

## **National transportation commission delivers report to Congress**

The 12-member National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission has unveiled a report to Congress calling for major investments in a multi-modal transportation system to help meet the nation's mobility needs over the next 50 years. WisDOT Secretary and Commission member Frank Busalacchi stated "the recommendations we're forwarding to Congress will foster a modern, efficient and environmentally responsible transportation system that will support our nation's economy and public safety." The full report along with an executive summary can be found on the Commission's Web site at: [www.transportationfortomorrow.org](http://www.transportationfortomorrow.org).

## **Year 2007 traffic deaths higher than year before, but below five-year average**

The year 2007 closed with some bad news and some good news regarding traffic fatalities in Wisconsin. Preliminary data shows traffic crashes claimed 741 lives in Wisconsin last year. That's up from the 712 traffic fatalities that occurred in 2006, but below the five-year average of 788 traffic deaths. One deadly trend in 2007 was a nearly 20 percent increase in motorcycle fatalities. Motorcycle crashes killed 111 people last year, compared to 93 in 2006. With more motorcycles on the road, safety officials are stressing the importance of motorcyclists being properly trained and equipped. Meanwhile, other motorists are being asked to be alert and share the road with motorcyclists.

## **Amtrak Hiawatha Service steaming towards all-time ridership record**

Ridership aboard Amtrak Hiawatha Service trains operating between Milwaukee and Chicago totaled 558,394 through November of 2007, already surpassing the 2006 calendar year total and setting the stage for a new, calendar year ridership record expected to exceed 600,000 passengers. The 59,711 people who boarded Hiawatha trains in November of 2007 sets a new monthly ridership record and represents an increase of nearly 18% over November of 2006. In November, a total of 10,385 Hiawatha passengers got on/off at the Milwaukee Airport Rail station - an average of 346 people per day. Another 5,717 riders utilized the new Sturtevant station in November - about 191 per day. The states of Wisconsin and Illinois have jointly supported the Hiawatha Service since 1989. Hiawatha trains currently make seven daily round trips between Milwaukee and Chicago (six on Sundays) and the service continues to boast the best on-time performance of any Amtrak route in the nation.

## **\$4.1 million initiative continues successful "transportation to jobs" program**

Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle recently announced that 17 transportation-provider groups across the state will benefit from a \$4.1 million initiative to continue the successful Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program. WETAP connects low-income workers with jobs through enhanced local transit services such as additional bus and taxi routes, vanpool and shuttle services, vehicle loan and repair programs, and the hiring of local mobility managers who coordinate transportation services for area workers and employers. More information including a list of the awards can be found at: <http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/>.

## **Traffic data collected for variety of purposes**

Keeping track of the number of vehicles using a particular roadway can help public and private officials make a variety of planning-related decisions. In Wisconsin, traffic data is collected in about 28,000 locations including Interstate and state highways in both rural and urban areas. The information is available to the public in several ways. WisDOT publishes the Wisconsin Highway Traffic Volume Data book that is available for purchase through the department or for free at local libraries. The information is also available on WisDOT Web site at: <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/counts/index.htm>.

## Upcoming events

January 30 – 31, 2008 WTBA/WisDOT Contractor-Engineer Conference, Madison Marriott West,  
<http://www.memberservicecenter.org/irmweb/wc.dll/wimadasn?id=wimadasn&doc=events/event&kn=108>

February 28, Partnering for Employment Workshop, Waukesha

*The WisDOT Connector Express* is produced by:

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Office of Public Affairs, PO Box 7910

Madison, WI 53707-7910

Phone: (608) 266-3581

Fax: (608) 266-7186

E-mail: [opa.exec@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:opa.exec@dot.state.wi.us)

Web site: [www.dot.wisconsin.gov](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov)

Back issues available at [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library/publications/format/newsletters/connector.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/library/publications/format/newsletters/connector.htm)